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In 2 Mh
Housekeepers' Chat

Wednesday February 19, 1930.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Johnny Junior's Playtime Hours." Information from Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor. Menu and recipes from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Publication available: "Infant Care."

--ooOoo--

What kind of toys should Johnny Junior play with? All those he got for Christmas? I should say not! You see, it was Johnny's first Christmas, and as his father says, young Johnny's nursery looked like a small gift-shop, after all his relatives had sent in their Yuletide offerings.

When I saw him the other day, Johnny was contentedly playing with a string of wooden spools and a few clothespins.

"Where," I asked, "are all the gifts you had on display during the Christmas holidays, including the wonderful Santa Claus doll?"

"Still on display," said the proud mother. "We took them upstairs, out of Johnny's way. He may play with some of them, when he grows older. Right now he wants to put everything into his mouth, so we have to be careful. I was afraid he'd swallow the small bells on the toy Santa Claus, or eat the paint from Santa's red coat. He is very fond of his wooden spools and his clothespins, and a little rubber doll that squeals. Wouldn't Aunt Lucille be surprised to know that her only nephew is so unsophisticated that he prefers an old-fashioned clothespin to an imported Santa Claus doll?"

She probably would. But then Aunt Lucille doesn't know much about babies.

"Look here," said Johnny's mother. "See what I've done? Tied Johnny's toys to his crib, with a piece of tape. He has learned how to get them back, after he has dropped them. For a while, I spent my spare time picking up his playthings. He would throw them down, just to see me pick them up. Isn't he smart?"

Johnny Junior grinned a cheerful grin, when I left the nursery. No wonder he has a happy disposition -- who wouldn't have, with such happy, cheerful parents?

As he grows older, Johnny Junior will need toys with which he can learn to do things, such as a few blocks, a cup and spoon, a pie pan, a box with a cover which he can take off and put on easily. It won't take him long to grow up to his Christmas gifts -- the big ball, and the string of large wooden beads. Before long he will be pulling the toy horse and wagon along the floor, and enjoying the picture book from Uncle Tom -- the nice

cloth book, with the large colored pictures of animals.

It's fun to watch a baby play, isn't it? To hear him laugh and crow, as if he had a joyful secret which we old-fogey grown-ups can't share.

There's one thing though, that always provokes me -- and that is to see a grown-up, who should know better, tickle and punch and toss a baby, to make him laugh. Such a procedure makes a child irritable and cross. How many fond parents have started their youngster on the road to bad habits, by rocking him, jumping him up and down on their knees, and shaking his bed or carriage. The more attention he gets, the more he will demand. Of course I don't mean that he should be let alone completely. When the baby is awake, perhaps for a few minutes before feeding, he should be taken up and held quietly in his mother's arms, in a variety of positions, so that no one set of muscles will become tired.

Morning is the best time for play. Afternoon play should be quiet and gentle; otherwise the baby will be over-excited, and his night rest may be disturbed. He will learn to play at the right time, if a special time is set aside two or three times a day, for this purpose. Play periods should be very short, when the baby is little. He should learn early that feeding and sleeping times are pleasant but serious occasions, not meant for play.

The older baby should learn to play for half an hour to an hour, without interruption. Put him in his pen or crib, give him one or two toys, tied by long tapes to the crib, and then let him alone. It is not good for a baby to be entertained or amused or waited on all the time. Let him learn to do things for himself. A hole in the nursery door, through which his mother can watch him without opening the door, will be a convenience; she can see that he is getting along all right, without letting the baby know he is being watched.

The questions today are about feeding the baby, what clothes he should wear, and how he should be trained. Since all these questions are answered in the booklet on "Infant Care," I shall not take your time with them today. If you have an old copy of "Infant Care," perhaps you'd like to send for a copy of the revised book -- revised less than a year ago, and brought up to date. The book is free.

Now let's see what the Menu Specialist is suggesting for her radio children today -- Scrambled Eggs, Potato Cakes, Cauliflower, and Jellied Apricots.

First, we shall scramble the eggs. Beat them lightly, with one tablespoon of cream or top milk for each egg. Season with salt and pepper. Pour the mixture into a pan containing one tablespoon of melted butter. Cook over hot water, stirring constantly until thickened. Remove, and serve at once.

The Potato Cakes are left-over mashed potatoes, made into cakes and browned lightly in butter.

I'll give you a recipe for the Jellied Apricots. Five ingredients, for Jellied Apricots:

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1/2 pound dried apricots	2 tablespoons gelatin
3-1/2 cups cold water	1 cup sugar, and
	1/4 teaspoon salt.

Five ingredients, for Jellied Apricots: (Repeat).

Wash the apricots, and soak them overnight in 3 cups cold water. Cook the apricots for 10 minutes in the water in which they were soaked, and then drain. Soften the gelatin in 1/2 cup cold water, and add, with the sugar and salt, to this hot apricot juice. Stir until the gelatin has dissolved, and set aside to chill. In the meantime cut the apricots into small pieces. When the gelatin mixture has partially set, stir in the apricots, put in a cold place for 3 or 4 hours, until thoroughly set. Turn onto a plate and serve with whipped cream, and a few chopped nuts sprinkled over the top. If preferred, the mixture may be moulded in cups for individual servings.

To repeat the menu: Scrambled Eggs; Potato Cakes; Cauliflower; and Jellied Apricots.

Do you keep all the Wednesday menus in your radio notebooks? Every Wednesday dinner is planned with the children in mind. I happen to know that next Wednesday we'll have a new recipe for Beef Loaf. That's something to look forward to.

Tomorrow; "The Way to a Man's Heart."

